

IN THE CLAIMS:

1. (Currently Amended) A tool for use in a wellbore, comprising:
a tubular housing having a bore therethrough and at least one flow port disposed through a wall thereof;
a sleeve slidably mounted within the housing, wherein the sleeve has a bore therethrough and at least one flow ~~slot~~ port disposed through a wall thereof, the at least one ~~slot~~ port selectively alignable with the at least one flow port; and
a seal assembly disposed between the housing and the sleeve, the seal assembly comprising an adapter, wherein the length of the adapter is substantially the same or greater than the length of the sleeve flow port ~~wherein the seal assembly is configured so that a first portion of the seal assembly protects a second portion of the seal assembly from substantial damage during actuation of the tool.~~
- 2.-4. (Canceled)
5. (Currently Amended) The tool of claim ~~[[3]]~~ 1, further comprising at least one protrusion disposed around the ~~center~~ adapter.
6. (Currently Amended) The tool of claim ~~[[3]]~~ 1, wherein the ~~center~~ adapter comprises at least one protrusion disposed around both an inner side and an outer side thereof.
7. (Currently Amended) The tool of claim ~~[[3]]~~ 1, wherein the ~~center~~ adapter comprises a plurality of protrusions disposed around both an inner side and an outer side thereof.
8. (Currently Amended) The tool of claim ~~[[3]]~~ 1, wherein:
the adapter is a center adapter, and
the seal assembly further comprises:

a first end adapter, wherein the first sealing element is disposed between the first end adapter and the center adapter in a first axial orientation;

a second end adapter, wherein the center adapter is disposed between the two end adapters;

~~at least one first sealing element disposed between the first end adapter and the center adapter; and~~

at least one second sealing element disposed between the second end adapter and the center adapter in a second axial orientation which is opposite to the first axial orientation.

9. (Original) The tool of claim 8, further comprising at least one protrusion disposed around the first end adapter.

10. (Currently Amended) The tool of claim 1, further comprising at least one equalization ~~slot~~ port disposed through a wall of the sleeve, wherein the equalization ~~slot~~ port is substantially smaller than the flow ~~slot~~ port.

11. (Original) The tool of claim 10, further comprising a means for selectively retaining the sleeve among a closed, an open, and an equalization position.

12. (Original) The tool of claim 1, wherein the housing further comprises an upper housing and a lower housing threadingly coupled together and one of the housings comprises a lip and the other housing comprises a tapered surface so that when the housings are coupled the lip mates with the tapered surface to form a seal.

13. (Currently Amended) A seal assembly for use in a wellbore tool, comprising:
a first end adapter;
a second end adapter;
a center adapter disposed between the two end adapters;
at least one substantially chevron-shaped first sealing element disposed between the first end adapter and the center adapter in a first axial orientation; and

at least one substantially chevron-shaped second sealing element disposed between the second end adapter and the center adapter in a second axial orientation which is opposite to the first axial orientation,

at least one of:

wherein the length of one of the adapters is substantially the same or greater than the length of a sleeve flow port of the wellbore tool, and

wherein the length of one of the adapters is greater than the combined length of the rest of the seal assembly ~~substantially corresponds to a length of a sleeve flow slot of the wellbore tool.~~

14. (Original) The seal assembly of claim 13, wherein a protrusion is disposed around the center adapter.
15. (Original) The seal assembly of claim 14, wherein the protrusion is a plurality of protrusions.
16. (Original) The seal assembly of claim 13, wherein the adapters are constructed from a relatively hard material and the sealing members are constructed from a relatively soft material.
17. (Original) The seal assembly of claim 13, wherein the adapters are constructed of a material selected from a group consisting of a thermoplastic polymer and metal.
18. (Original) The seal assembly of claim 13, wherein the sealing elements are constructed of a material selected from a group consisting of an elastomer and a thermoplastic polymer.
- 19.-22. (Canceled)

23. (New) The tool of claim 1, wherein the seal assembly further comprises at least one substantially chevron-shaped first sealing element disposed proximate to a first end of the adapter.
24. (New) The tool of claim 1, wherein:
the seal assembly further comprises at least one substantially chevron-shaped first sealing element disposed proximate to a first end of the adapter, and
the sealing element is made from an elastomer and the adapter is made from a thermoplastic or a metal.
25. (New) The tool of claim 1, wherein:
the adapter is a center adapter,
the first sealing element is disposed in a first axial orientation, and
the seal assembly further comprises at least one substantially chevron-shaped second sealing element disposed proximate a second end of the center adapter which is opposite to the first end in a second axial orientation which is opposite to the first axial orientation.
26. (New) The tool of claim 1, wherein the seal assembly is annular.
27. (New) A method of using the wellbore tool as recited in claim 1 in a pressurized wellbore, comprising:
providing the wellbore tool as recited in claim 1;
running the wellbore tool into a pressurized wellbore; and
sliding the sleeve over the seal assembly, wherein the adapter will limit fluid flow across the seal assembly so that the seal assembly is not substantially damaged during sliding of the sleeve.
28. (New) The tool of claim 13, wherein the sealing elements are made from an elastomer and the adapters are made from a thermoplastic or a metal.

29. (New) The tool of claim 13, wherein the length of one of the adapters is substantially the same or greater than the length of a sleeve flow port of the wellbore tool.
30. (New) The tool of claim 13, wherein the length the center adapter is substantially the same or greater than the length of a sleeve flow port of the wellbore tool.
31. (New) The tool of claim 13, wherein the length of one of the adapters is greater than the combined length of the rest of the seal assembly.
32. (New) The tool of claim 13, wherein the length the center adapter is greater than the combined length of the rest of the seal assembly.
33. (New) The tool of claim 13, wherein the adapters and sealing elements are annular.
34. (New) A method of using the seal assembly as recited in claim 13 in a pressurized wellbore, comprising:
 disposing the seal assembly as recited in claim 13 into a wellbore tool comprising a housing and a sleeve;
 running the wellbore tool into a pressurized wellbore; and
 sliding the sleeve over the seal assembly, wherein one of the adapters will limit fluid flow across the seal assembly so that the seal assembly is not substantially damaged during sliding of the sleeve.